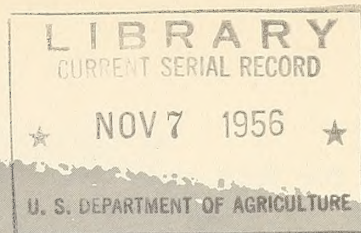


Historic, archived document

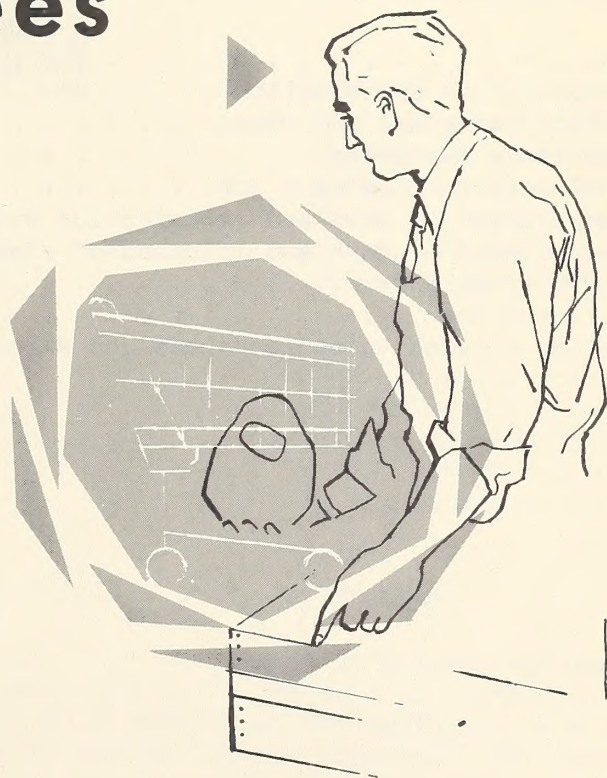
Do not assume content reflects current
scientific knowledge, policies, or practices.

1200
M 34Amd
Cop. 4



JOB ATTITUDES

of Supermarket Employees



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH SERVICE
Marketing Research Division

Washington, D. C.

AMS- 142

September 1956

PREFACE

Data for this report were collected as part of a larger study on "Improving the Effectiveness of Supermarket Managers." The authors wish to acknowledge the cooperation of branch personnel of Food Fair, Inc., Philadelphia, Pa., in conducting and making available their survey of employee attitudes.

CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
Introduction.	3
Age as a factor in job satisfaction	3
Job satisfaction among men and women.	4
Full- and part-time employees	4
Job tenure and satisfaction with job.	5
Employees' department of work and satisfaction with job	5
Employees' department of work and opinions of store managers.	6
Reasons for disliking work.	6
Reasons for liking work	7
Job satisfaction related to store volume and sales per man-hour	7

JOB ATTITUDES OF SUPERMARKET EMPLOYEES

By R. W. Hoecker, head, and Martin Kriesberg,
marketing specialist, Wholesaling and Retailing Section,
Transportation and Facilities Branch,
Marketing Research Division

INTRODUCTION

A study is being made to find methods of increasing the productivity and efficiency of supermarket employees. This report is based upon the information on employee job satisfaction collected by the cooperating firm as part of the larger study.

The employee opinions expressed are those of the nonsupervisory employees (below department head level) of 28 units of an eastern supermarket organization located in the New York-New Jersey area. While these opinions are from the employees of only one firm, the information should be useful to other supermarket operators as an aid in understanding the underlying patterns of employee attitudes concerning their work.

For all of the employees interviewed in the 28 units, 47 percent indicated they were satisfied, 37 percent neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, and 16 percent dissatisfied. A high level of job satisfaction among supermarket employees probably reduces the rate of employee turnover, attracts more competent applicants for employment, and results in better customer relations, which may decrease the need for goodwill expenditures. In the long run, improvements such as these contribute toward holding down the costs of distributing food through supermarket channels.

Differences in opinions regarding job satisfaction among employees in different age, sex, job tenure, department of work, and other classifications are presented, showing how some employees feel about their work in supermarkets. The total number of respondents are not the same in all tables because some respondents failed to answer all of the questions on the questionnaires.

AGE AS A FACTOR IN JOB SATISFACTION

In this study a relationship was found to exist between age and job satisfaction. As age increased there was an increase in job satisfaction (table 1). In the age group under 21, 27.6 percent of the employees were satisfied, while in the over 50 age group 63 percent of the employees were satisfied with their jobs. Conversely, as age increased dissatisfaction decreased from 23.5 percent (under 21) to a low of 5.5 percent in the over 50 class. The greatest difference in the percentage of satisfied employees was between the under 21 age group (27.6 percent) and the 21-30 age group (52 percent).

Between 30 and 32 percent of the employees in each of the 3 groups 21 years and older were neutral, neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with their jobs. When it is considered that 78 percent of all employees have been working for the company 6 months or more, it becomes apparent that a significant number of experienced people are rather undecided in their feelings about the job.

Table 1.--Degree of employee job satisfaction by age in 28 eastern supermarkets, 1955

Degree of satisfaction	Age group			
	Under 21	21-30	31-50	Over 50
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Satisfied.....	27.6	52.0	60.0	63.0
Neither satisfied/dissatisfied:	48.9	31.8	30.3	31.5
Dissatisfied.....	23.5	16.2	9.7	5.5
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number respondents.....	264	199	290	54

JOB SATISFACTION AMONG MEN AND WOMEN

Men seem to be less satisfied with their jobs in supermarkets than women are (table 2). Forty-one percent of the men responding replied that they were satisfied, compared with 57.4 percent of the women. The proportion of dissatisfaction among the men was twice as great as among the women--19.6 percent of the men compared with 9 percent of the women.

The men outnumbered the women by a 2 to 1 ratio in the supermarkets studied. The women generally worked in the meat department or in the "front end" department.

Table 2.--Degree of employee job satisfaction among men and women in 28 eastern supermarkets, 1955

Degree of satisfaction	Men	Women
	Percent	Percent
Satisfied.....	41.2	57.4
Neither satisfied/dissatisfied...	39.2	33.6
Dissatisfied.....	19.6	9.0
Total.....	100.0	100.0
Number of respondents.....	490	256

FULL- AND PART-TIME EMPLOYEES

A considerably larger percentage of the full-time employees were satisfied with their jobs than the part-time employees (table 3). Over half (52.2 percent) of the full-time employees were either well satisfied or moderately satisfied compared with only 35.3 percent of the part-time employees. Nearly half (45.2 percent) of the part-time employees expressed neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction.

Table 3.--Degree of employee job satisfaction among full-time and part-time employees in 28 eastern supermarkets, 1955

Degree of satisfaction	:	Full-time	:	Part-time
	:	Percent	:	Percent
Well satisfied.....	:	19.5	:	10.5
Moderately satisfied.....	:	32.7	:	24.8
Neither satisfied/dissatisfied.....	:	34.3	:	45.2
Dissatisfied.....	:	13.5	:	19.5
Total.....	:	100.0	:	100.0
Number of respondents.....	:	626	:	210

JOB TENURE AND SATISFACTION WITH JOB

There is a slight tendency for job satisfaction to increase with length of employment (table 4). The range is from 43 percent for the well and moderately satisfied with less than 6 months employment to 56 percent in the group employed 3 years and over. There is a pronounced tendency for the number of well satisfied employees to increase as length of job tenure increases.

Table 4.--Degree of satisfaction with work related to job tenure in 28 eastern supermarkets, 1955

Degree of satisfaction	:	Length of employment with company						
	:	Under 6 mo.	:	6-12 mo.	:	1-3 yrs.	:	3 yrs. & over
	:	Percent	:	Percent	:	Percent	:	Percent
Well satisfied.....	:	10.1	:	13.9	:	19.2	:	22.4
Moderately satisfied...	:	33.1	:	27.1	:	28.6	:	34.3
Neither satisfied nor	:		:		:		:	
dissatisfied.....	:	40.2	:	45.8	:	33.7	:	33.3
Dissatisfied.....	:	16.6	:	13.2	:	18.5	:	10.0
Total	:	100.0	:	100.0	:	100.0	:	100.0
Number of respondents..	:	182	:	144	:	297	:	225

EMPLOYEES' DEPARTMENT OF WORK AND SATISFACTION WITH JOB

Meat and dairy departments had the highest percentage of employees who expressed satisfaction with their work of any of the departments studied, and the lowest percentage that expressed dissatisfaction (table 5). The department with the lowest percentage (39.9 percent) of employees expressing satisfaction and next to the highest percentage (17.7 percent) expressing dissatisfaction was the front end, which represents about 30 percent of the store employees.

Table 5.--Degree of satisfaction with job among the departments in 28 eastern supermarkets, 1955

Degree of satisfaction	Store department				
	Grocery	Produce	Meat	Dairy	Front end
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Satisfied.....	46.4	48.0	55.3	56.7	39.9
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.....	37.6	33.3	33.0	35.8	42.4
Dissatisfied.....	16.0	18.7	11.7	7.5	17.7
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of respondents..	194	102	197	67	238

EMPLOYEES' DEPARTMENT OF WORK AND OPINIONS OF STORE MANAGERS

Higher percentages of the employees in the grocery (74.6 percent), dairy (70.7 percent), and front end (67.9 percent) departments expressed favorable opinions of their store managers than in the other two departments (table 6). There appeared to be a reverse relationship between the employees' degree of job satisfaction and their opinions of store managers. The front end department had the lowest percentage of employees who were satisfied with their jobs, but third from the highest percentage of employees whose opinions of the store managers were favorable. Likewise, the meat department had next to the highest percentage of employees who were well satisfied with their jobs, but the highest percentage of employees with unfavorable opinions of store managers. However, the meat department had a higher percentage of employees who expressed favorable opinions of their department managers than any of the other departments.

Table 6.--Employees' opinion of store manager related to department in 28 eastern supermarkets, 1955

Opinion	Store department				
	Grocery	Produce	Meat	Dairy	Front end
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent	Percent
Favorable.....	74.6	63.6	62.9	70.7	67.9
Neither favorable nor unfavorable.....	11.8	15.9	12.6	13.8	14.2
Unfavorable.....	13.6	20.5	24.5	15.5	17.9
Total.....	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0
Number of respondents..	169	88	159	58	212

REASONS FOR DISLIKING WORK

Approximately 16 percent of the employees studied expressed dissatisfaction with their present jobs. Some of the other employees disliked certain features about their work. There were 467 replies, with more than one reply received from some respondents, to the question "What don't you like about the job?" The replies and the percentage of the responses for each were as follows:

<u>Reason for disliking work</u>	<u>Percentage of responses</u>
Low pay.....	21.4
Overtime hours.....	19.3
Manager or supervisor.....	16.9
Store facilities.....	6.6
Too much work.....	6.6
Some of the other employees.....	4.5
Night work.....	3.9
Customers.....	3.9
Kind of work.....	3.6
Manner in which assignments are made.....	3.6
Other miscellaneous reasons.....	<u>9.7</u>
Total.....	100.0

REASONS FOR LIKING WORK

Approximately 47 percent of the employees studied expressed satisfaction with their present job, and most of the rest liked certain features of the work. There were 887 responses to the question "What do you like about the job?" The replies and the percentage of the responses for each were as follows:

<u>Reason for liking work</u>	<u>Percentage of responses</u>
Employees working with and store friendliness.....	35.8
Manager and management.....	17.0
Convenience of store location.....	8.0
Type of work.....	7.9
Working conditions and facilities.....	6.4
Meet people.....	5.4
Cooperation in store.....	4.2
Pleasant surroundings and atmosphere.....	2.2
Chance to learn.....	1.8
Other miscellaneous reasons.....	<u>11.3</u>
Total.....	100.0

JOB SATISFACTION RELATED TO STORE VOLUME AND SALES PER MAN-HOUR

As sales volume increased there was an increase in sales per man-hour and in job satisfaction and a decrease in job dissatisfaction (table 7). Research findings from other studies indicate that this increase in sales per man-hour is probably due mainly to the greater efficiency normally achieved at the higher volume. The size and layout of the stores involved were about the same, with the principal differences being in the number of people employed and the volume of business handled. It is of interest to note that sales per man-hour may be increased without increasing job dissatisfaction.

Table 7.--Degree of job satisfaction related to store volume and sales per man-hour

Weekly store volume:	Degree of satisfaction			Sales per man-hour
	Satisfied	Neither sat./dis.	Dissatisfied	
	Percent	Percent	Percent	Dollars
\$20,000 - \$34,499	48.8	36.6	14.6	19.84
\$34,500 - \$47,499	49.0	34.0	17.0	20.73
\$47,500 - \$65,000	52.6	36.4	11.0	21.12

